

GAO

June 1986

# EMBASSY SECURITY

## State Department Efforts to Improve Security Overseas



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United States  
General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

National Security and  
International Affairs Division

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June 12, 1986

The Honorable Richard G. Lugar  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations  
United States Senate

The Honorable Dante B. Fascell  
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs  
House of Representatives

This report concludes the work we undertook in response to your respective committees' requests dated April 5 and October 11, 1984, for information on the Department of State's efforts to improve embassy security. Over the past 21 months, we have issued a report entitled Status of the Department of State's Security Enhancement Program (GAO/NSIAD-84-163, September 14, 1984), provided information and briefings to the staffs of your committees on several occasions, and testified twice before the Committee on Foreign Affairs and its Subcommittees on International Operations and on Arms Control, International Security, and Science (September 26, 1984, and March 21, 1985). As the culmination of our efforts, this report focuses on the fiscal year 1985 Emergency Security Supplemental, and discusses several issues relating to future funding, the Department's security organization, and the need for additional security standards.

The Department has been using the \$343.4 million Emergency Security Supplemental funds appropriated in the wake of the September 1984 Beirut embassy annex bombing to improve the physical security of its facilities overseas. Completing the projects and improvements initiated with these funds as well as other planned construction will likely require more funding than the Department currently estimates. In the past, the Department has underestimated costs to carry out security-related projects—especially those involving construction—and this appears to be a continuing problem. Furthermore, the Department is using supplemental appropriations to cover costs of a recurring nature, such as personnel salaries. Annual funding increases—either in the Department's base budget or in additional supplementals—will be needed to carry on the increased level of activity generated by the supplementals. The issue of future cost increases is particularly important in light of the Department's plans to request an additional \$4-5 billion over the next 5 years to carry out a massive embassy replacement program and other security improvements.

The Department's recently created (November 1985) Bureau of Diplomatic Security provides more visibility and greater central direction to security matters within the Department than has been the case in the past. Throughout our fieldwork, however, we found continued instances of disputes between the Department and overseas posts and between the Department and other agencies, such as the United States Information Agency (USIA) and the Agency for International Development (AID), which have delayed needed security measures. Disputes have not always been elevated to a level sufficient to resolve them quickly.

While the Department is making considerable progress in developing and implementing security standards, several areas still need attention. At the locations we visited, we found significant differences in the level of security from one post to the next—even among posts within the same threat category. Furthermore, the Department has not established standards for interim security measures to be used while awaiting permanent improvements, and minimum standards for contract guards are needed.

Based on the results of our review (which are detailed in appendix I), we are recommending that the Secretary of State

- ensure that more realistic cost estimates for security and construction projects are prepared and that recurring costs for staffing and maintaining projects initially funded by security supplementals are made known to the Congress;
- establish a mechanism to ensure that differences concerning security requirements within the Department or between the Department and other agencies are resolved quickly; and
- develop standards covering (1) minimum physical and procedural security requirements for posts in each threat category, (2) interim security measures, and (3) hiring, training, and supervision of contract guards.

Our total work in response to your requests was performed from May 1984 to January 1986 at the Departments of State and Defense, AID, and USIA, and at posts in 15 countries. Overseas locations were selected based on several criteria, including level of threat, amount of security funding, and plans for major embassy construction.

A draft of this report was made available to the Department of State, USIA, and AID for their review and comments. State expressed general agreement with our conclusions, and stated that it was taking action on

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our recommendations. USIA agreed in principle with the report's general findings, but disagreed with some of the specific details; AID provided some additional information on subjects discussed in this report. The agencies' comments have been incorporated throughout the report where appropriate, and each agency's response is included in appendix VI.

We performed our review in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

Unless you publicly announce its contents earlier, we plan no further distribution of this report until 5 days from the date of this report. At that time we will send copies to appropriate congressional committees; the Director, Office of Management and Budget; and other interested parties.



Frank C. Conahan  
Director

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# Security of U.S. Overseas Personnel and Facilities Against Terrorist Threats

Since the early 1970's the Department has sought to provide adequate security safeguards to counter potential terrorist threats at overseas posts. These threats have grown in number and intensity, changing from small group attacks to mob violence, and most recently to vehicular bombings. Keeping up with the potential threats has caused a large increase in security program funding. About \$1 billion has been appropriated since 1980, with more than half approved in fiscal year 1985. Although no final decisions had been made regarding fiscal year 1986 funding at the time we completed our work, Department estimates totalled over \$1 billion in its base budget and supplementals.

**Table I.1: Department of State Funding for Security Programs Fiscal Years 1980-85**

Millions of Dollars			
Fiscal year	Security budget	Supplementals	Total
1980	\$ 45.9	\$ 7.6	<b>\$ 53.5</b>
1981	81.4	1.5	<b>82.9</b>
1982	72.1	51.4	<b>123.5</b>
1983	78.0	32.8	<b>110.8</b>
1984	92.8	15.7	<b>108.5</b>
1985	120.7	366.0	<b>486.7</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$490.9</b>	<b>\$475.0</b>	<b>\$965.9</b>

The bombing of the U.S. embassy annex in Beirut, Lebanon, on September 20, 1984—the third bombing aimed at U.S. personnel in that city in 18 months—focused the nation's attention on the vulnerability of U.S. facilities overseas and resulted in extensive efforts to improve the physical security of U.S. posts worldwide. Following the Beirut attack, Congress authorized a \$365 million Emergency Security Supplemental. Congress appropriated \$110.2 million on October 12, 1984, and an additional \$233.1 million on August 15, 1985, a total of over \$343 million.

In June 1985, the State-commissioned Advisory Panel on Overseas Security (headed by retired Admiral Bobby R. Inman) presented a comprehensive report on the security of overseas posts. The advisory panel concluded that physical security of overseas posts was inadequate and that the Department was not organized to quickly respond to potential threats. Its report contained 91 recommendations for sweeping changes in the Department's organization, professionalism of security officers, international diplomacy to thwart terrorism, intelligence and alerting processes, and physical security. The panel also recommended construction and/or renovation of 126 buildings at an estimated cost of about \$3.5 billion.

## Use of Fiscal Year 1985 Security Supplemental

The Department earmarked the \$343.4 million appropriated for the emergency supplemental for a wide range of security activities and improvements. Among the major categories to be funded were: renovation or construction of new buildings (\$177.5 million); improving perimeter security with fences, walls, and vehicle barriers (\$63.6 million); procuring communications systems equipment and radios for posts (\$29.8 million), purchase of armored vehicles (\$14.1 million), and additional security personnel, including regional security officers and contract guards (\$8.2 million). As of January 28, 1986, about \$99 million had been obligated. (See appendix II for detailed breakout of the Department's allocation of the supplemental as of January 1986.)

The single largest amount to be expended from the supplemental is \$177.5 million to construct or substantially modify 13 facilities which the Department considered particularly vulnerable because of location and design of the existing buildings. As of the end of January 1986, State had obligated about \$22.5 million for this effort. The Department estimates that all 13 buildings will be completed and occupied by the end of fiscal year 1988, although three are behind schedule as of May 1986. Even when completed, these buildings may not meet all current standards. For example, the Department requires at least 100 feet between the building and vehicular entrances and perimeter walls to minimize the effect of an explosion. Five of the 13 projects will not meet the 100 feet criterion when completed because suitable land is not available.

The second largest amount (\$63.6 million) has been earmarked for perimeter security improvements. Although historically the responsibility for protecting embassy perimeters has been that of host governments, the Department began expending resources to complement these efforts following mob violence against embassies in Pakistan, Libya, and Iran. The Department has contracted with nine U.S. firms to conduct perimeter surveys, make recommendations, and construct improvements at 37 overseas posts in fiscal year 1986 and at 33 posts in fiscal year 1987. Each contractor is responsible for all phases of work—including the surveys, drawings, and construction—at their assigned posts. Improvements to be made include projects such as constructing walls and installing vehicle arrest systems. Following completion of the drawings, the Department reviews the documents and makes a final determination on the recommendations. As of March 1986 the contractors had completed surveys at 37 posts, and construction had begun at 20 posts.

Department officials stated that using U.S. firms to manage these projects will produce quicker results than previous security improvement programs. Prior efforts—for example the Department's Security Enhancement Program which began in 1980— were managed by Department personnel and relied extensively on foreign contractors to construct improvements. Delays occurred because of difficulties in completing architectural and engineering drawings and unavailability of security equipment overseas. In comparison, we noted that architectural drawings done by the U.S. contractors were generally being completed within 2 months, whereas some drawings under the Security Enhancement Program took as long as 2 years to complete.

At the conclusion of our fieldwork, none of the perimeter projects assigned to U.S. contractors had been completed. Thus, it was too early to assess the costs and benefits of using this approach. As projects are completed, the Department will be in a better position to make such an evaluation.

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### Costs to Carry Out Security Projects Are Often Understated

The Department's construction programs and projects have often cost more and taken longer to complete than planned. Cost increases and delays have occurred for a variety of reasons, including inadequate initial estimates, more stringent security standards for new buildings, design changes, disagreements among post and headquarters personnel over the details of construction plans, and a lack of qualified contractors in certain countries.

The following examples illustrate this problem:

- Construction costs for most of the 13 buildings being funded under the 1985 supplemental are experiencing cost growth. The setback standard and other security requirements—parking, shielding, walls—have required revisions to architectural plans, which had resulted in higher costs for 11 of the 13 projects as of November 1985. The Department estimated the cost to complete these 13 projects would be \$89.1 million more than the \$177.5 million originally anticipated. At one location, the cost of completing the new chancery compound had grown from \$13.5 million to \$32.8 million because of new security requirements. At another location, additional security features had increased the cost of the new chancery from \$10.5 million to \$16.9 million.
- The Department's perimeter security improvement program began with an estimate of \$40 million to complete 70 posts. At the time we completed our review, contractors were estimating it would cost about

\$91 million to complete just 37 of the 70 posts. As of March 1986, the Department had signed contracts for construction improvements at the first 20 posts.

- Under the Security Enhancement Program, begun in 1980, the Department projected spending \$192 million to fully upgrade 125 posts within 5 years. Five years later the program had been reduced to 62 posts at a cost of \$145 million over 7 years. The program was reduced because of rising costs, the closing of several posts, and a reevaluation of the threat. In 1984—the year the program was scheduled to be completed—only 10 of the projects were finished, and the remaining 52 were scheduled for completion by 1987.
- In Moscow, the Department planned to construct a new chancery, a school, Marine guard quarters, residential housing units, and support facilities. The original estimate to complete these projects was about \$30 million, but through fiscal year 1985, over \$167 million had been appropriated for these projects. The additional funds were being used to cover cost growth resulting from inflation, changes in scope, revised security standards, and delays experienced by the Soviet contractor.
- The chancery project in Cairo was originally estimated to cost \$27 million and to be completed in 1985. The project experienced delays and cost growth due to lack of performance by the contractor, changes in the scope of the project due to changing security requirements, and indecision as to how many floors the building should have. In March 1986, the estimate stood at about \$40-43 million.

In commenting on a draft of this report, the Department agreed that costs for construction projects have increased in the past due to more stringent security standards, design changes, and lack of qualified contractors in certain countries. The Department stated that cost estimates for perimeter improvements and new capital construction projects have been reviewed to ensure that the current estimates are realistic and adequate to fund these projects, based on existing security criteria, and that Congress was being kept informed of costs associated with security projects through monthly reports and annual budget submissions.

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### **Recurring Costs Required to Maintain and Support Security Projects**

The Fiscal Year 1985 Security Supplemental was being used to vastly expand the Department's security-related activities. In May 1985 (the latest data available), the Department estimated that recurring costs resulting from the supplemental would amount to about \$92 million in fiscal year 1986 with additional funding required in subsequent years. Most of these recurring costs involved salaries and expenses for additional personnel, such as regional security officers and Marine guards.

Other recurring costs included maintenance and support for security equipment, contract services, and rented office space.

Recurring costs will continue to grow as the Department expands its security activities. For example, the Department estimates 1,388 additional full-time positions will be needed to staff the Department's Diplomatic Security Service and to manage the expanded embassy construction program. These, and other costs of a continuing nature, are not now being clearly presented to the Congress as recurring costs.

## **Department's Security Organization**

The Department of State is the lead agency responsible for alerting U S citizens to possible threats and for providing security at U.S. overseas posts. Over the past few years, reports by us, the Department's Inspector General, the Congressional Research Service, the Secretary of State's Advisory Panel on Overseas Security, a staff study of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives, and a number of management consultants have criticized State's organization for handling security functions. Reports identified problems, such as fragmentation of security functions among several offices and a multiplicity of funding sources, as hindering the initiation and completion of security projects.

When we began our review in mid-1984, the Department's security functions were primarily dispersed among several offices in State's Bureau of Administration. That Bureau, headed by an Assistant Secretary, develops, manages, and monitors administrative support services for the Department and other foreign affairs agencies in Washington and overseas. Its security-related functions were in four major offices or staffs:

- The Special Programs and Liaison staff, created in 1980 to manage the Security Enhancement Program, was responsible for approving all funding for projects under this program and monitoring progress at each post.
- The Office of Security provided physical and technical security to personnel in overseas missions, safeguarded national security information, and assessed the threat to overseas posts.
- The Office of Communications developed and implemented secure communications facilities, safeguarded classified transmissions, bought and maintained communications equipment, and provided communications services for the Department and other government agencies.

- The Office of Foreign Buildings constructed new facilities, improved structural security, and approved contracts for overseas construction services.

At the same time, outside the Bureau of Administration, the Office for Counter-Terrorism and Emergency Planning provided personnel to respond to overseas terrorist incidents, formulated security policy and guidelines, and coordinated government-wide antiterrorist activities. The regional bureaus also participated in security activities, principally through funding contract guard services at posts.

In response to criticism of this organizational structure, the Department acted in March 1985 to simplify funding of security programs by placing previously dispersed responsibilities within the Office of Security and disbanding the Special Programs and Liaison staff. The Bureau of Administration was also renamed the Bureau of Administration and Security to give greater visibility to the security function.

In November 1985, the Department further centralized its security organization. It created a new Bureau of Diplomatic Security, to be headed by an Assistant Secretary, thus putting it on an equal level with the Bureau of Administration. The Office of Security was transferred from the Bureau of Administration to the new bureau; responsibility for emergency action planning and embassy training previously performed by the Office of Counter-Terrorism and Emergency Planning was likewise placed within the new bureau; and responsibility for managing the contract guard services was transferred from the regional bureaus to the new bureau.

Appendix III contains organization charts depicting these organizational changes. As shown, the new bureau does not oversee all functions important to security. (For example, the elements responsible for improving the structural security of buildings, contracting for overseas construction services, and procuring communications equipment remain in the Bureau of Administration.) However, the new organization has significantly increased the visibility of the security function within the Department and has brought together those specific functions where the primary thrust is security.

## Disagreements Continue to Cause Delays in Security Improvements

In our last two reports<sup>1</sup> we discussed problems caused by disagreements and misunderstandings between the State Department and other agencies, such as USIA and AID. We concluded that improvements had been made in resolving these differences but some problems remained.

During our most recent fieldwork, we again noted that recommendations for security improvements at other agencies' facilities were not always being implemented. In some cases, this was because agencies disagreed with the Department over what was needed, misunderstandings as to who would pay for the improvements, and the timing of upgrades. Agencies emphasized operational reasons—for example, need for public accessibility to their facilities—as a basis for disagreeing with some proposals to improve security. Furthermore, there have been differences of opinion over the ultimate authority for security where agencies are located outside the embassy or consulate.

The Department established an Overseas Security Policy Group in 1982, composed of various agencies' security directors, to address overseas security issues. This group, which is headed by a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, provides a forum for airing differences and resolving interagency disputes. It has been instrumental in establishing policies on how agencies will respond to threats (e.g., residential security). The group does not, however, become involved in implementing security projects or in making decisions regarding construction or relocation of facilities. Decisions of this magnitude concern officials outside the security arena and usually require senior management involvement.

Conflicts also sometimes arise between officials at posts—particularly the Ambassador—and security staffs at Department headquarters. Personnel at both headquarters and posts told us that quite often the personal views of the individuals involved determine what project is implemented, in what form, and how quickly. They further stated that too often, security projects took so long to get started that the ambassadors and senior managers who agreed to the recommendations were replaced by individuals who at times had different ideas on how security should proceed. Establishing minimum standards, as discussed in the following section, should help limit disputes. But when they arise, State needs a mechanism to ensure that disagreements are resolved expeditiously.

<sup>1</sup>Improvements Needed in Providing Security at Overseas Posts (GAO/ID-82-61, Sept 30, 1982) and Status of the Department of State's Security Enhancement Program (GAO/NSIAD-84-163, Sept 14, 1984)

In April 1985, we informed the Department of 16 instances where disagreements had caused or were causing delays in completing physical improvements at the posts we visited. In its response on August 23, 1985, State presented its analysis of these disagreements and provided additional information. Our findings and State's response are in appendix IV. Post identifications have been deleted for security reasons

In commenting on a draft of our report, the Department agreed that "bureaucratic gridlock" has often prevented action on security measures. To prevent similar disputes, the Department commented that it has been working with other agencies to develop security standards and to coordinate security projects. According to the Department, if a disagreement persists, the matter can be referred to the Under Secretary for Management, who has authority to direct resolution.

AID stated that coordination and cooperation with the Department have been generally close and effective, and that the recently signed charter for the Overseas Security Policy Group should ensure that this relationship continues. USIA agreed that the group provides a forum for airing differences, but expressed concern that the group is not designed to deal with individual post problems related to security requirements. In that regard, USIA stated that more needs to be done to improve the coordination between State and USIA on individual post security projects

## Additional Standards Needed,

The State Department is responsible for establishing the type of security safeguards needed for posts, as well as defining technical specifications (e.g., density of walls and type of vehicle arrest systems)

The Department has made considerable progress in developing and implementing standards. Several areas, however, need additional attention:

- Minimum security standards for posts have not been established. Consequently, safeguards vary significantly from post to post, even among posts in the same threat category, and in some cases safeguards at high threat posts were less stringent than at lower threat posts.
- The Department has not yet established standards for interim security measures to be put in place while permanent improvements are being made.
- Standards are needed for hiring, training, and supervising contract guards.

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**Lack of Security Standards  
Causes Security Variations  
From Post to Post**

The extent of security varied significantly among overseas posts in the same threat category because State does not have guidance on security measures required for a given threat. Table I.2 describes some of the physical and procedural security measures in place at the time of our visits.

**Appendix I  
Security of U.S. Overseas Personnel and  
Facilities Against Terrorist Threats**

**Table I.2: Security Measures at 23 Overseas Posts by Threat Level**

	Physical measures			Procedural measures			
	Access control of chancery	Electronic vehicle arrest systems	Perimeter walls	Visual vehicle inspections	Employee ID badges	Parking Prohibited on compound	Armored vehicles for all U.S. employees
<b>Category I posts (critical threat potential)</b>							
1	Yes	No	Yes	N/A	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
5	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Category II posts (high threat potential)</b>							
6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
7	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
8	Yes	No	No	N/A	No	Yes	Yes
9	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Unknown
10	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
11	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
12	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
13	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
14	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Unknown
15	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
16	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
17	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
18	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
19	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Category II posts (medium threat potential)</b>							
20	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
21	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No
22	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
23	No	No	No	N/A	No	No	No
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>

At five posts in the critical threat category—which the Department considered particularly vulnerable to terrorist attack—we found that three

posts had vehicle arrest systems but two did not, and three posts had perimeter walls while two did not.

We also found instances where less threatened posts had more stringent security than some of the most critically threatened posts. For example, 16 of 23 posts required vehicles to be inspected for bombs prior to entering the embassy compound; 2 of these posts were in the "medium" threat category, 11 were in the "high" threat category, and 3 were in the "critical" threat category. Another illustration of differing levels of security is electronic vehicle arrest barriers, which control entry into the compound. We found 7 of the 23 posts had such systems in place, including 3 in the "critical" threat category, 3 in the "high" threat category, and 1 in the "medium" category.

A number of factors contribute to variations of security measures from post to post. In some instances, posts cannot be readily upgraded due to the design, age, or location of the structure, and in other cases security improvements were planned but not yet implemented, or post officials inconsistently applied technical specifications.

In commenting on a draft of our report, the Department agreed that levels of security vary from one post to another, but stated that permanent security improvements had been made at a number of posts after our visits, and interim measures had been taken at others. The Department further stated that the physical security standards handbook has been revised and that a procedural security manual is being developed to address such measures as vehicle inspection for bombs, identification badges for employees, and parking on embassy compounds. The Department contends, and we agree, that such standards (based on the post threat level) will work towards eliminating the security variations that currently exist from post to post. USIA stated that it has established minimum standards for its facilities which are not located in State Department buildings. USIA, however, agreed that safeguards vary from post to post, attributing this to differing priorities in implementing security improvements and changing standards to meet emerging threats.

**Technical Specifications Were  
Being Established but Not Always  
Followed**

The Office of Security has established, or was in the process of establishing, technical specifications for a wide range of physical security items to protect the perimeter, exterior, and interior of our diplomatic installations. We identified at least 20 security manuals, cables, memoranda, and other written materials that provide such guidance. This assortment caused some confusion at posts concerning what equipment

was available and how it could be obtained, installed, and operated. We were told that the Department was consolidating and updating this guidance and a comprehensive manual was being prepared.

Specifications for perimeter upgrades were not being followed at some posts. For example, one contractor selected to recommend and implement improvements at three high-threat posts reported that none of these posts had constructed steel bollards, barriers, and gates according to Department standards. We also found that electronic vehicle arrest systems were not always functioning

As of April 1985, the Department had purchased and transported overseas almost 200 electronic barriers at a cost of over \$2 million. During our visits to posts, we noted several systems were not operating due to faulty installations, equipment problems, or a lack of spare parts. For example, at one post an initial request for three barriers for the embassy compound was made in December 1983. Due to a series of problems, the barriers did not arrive at post until December 1984 and were still not functioning at the time of our visit in May 1985 because the contractor shipped the wrong wiring diagram and control panel. The regional security officer at the post advised us that the initial delays were caused by poor communication between the post, the Department, and the contractor regarding the type of barriers needed and how they were to be installed. At another post, two barriers were installed approximately 11 months after they were requested. The delays were caused by shipping problems, incomplete installation instructions, and poor quality materials.

In addition to installation problems, sophisticated electronic and mechanical equipment can be difficult to maintain, particularly in some foreign locations. In commenting on our report, the Department said private sector program managers will be required to develop a program for standard and specialized maintenance at posts. The Department has a shortage of maintenance personnel to meet the increased maintenance requirements resulting from vehicle arrest systems and other new security devices. The Department plans to add additional engineering officers and Seabees and is attempting to contract out for maintenance services where feasible.

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### Interim Security Measures

The Department does not have standards or technical guidance for interim security measures. Posts, however, had taken temporary steps—such as stacking sand bags or restricting vehicle traffic—to

enhance security immediately. Generally, such measures are left to the ingenuity and discretion of the individual posts, and opportunities for further improving security may go unnoticed. At one high threat post, for example, a mechanical vehicle barrier at the main compound gate had not been working for several months and no alternative action had been taken, such as parking a truck in front of the gate to protect the perimeter until the permanent barrier was repaired.

In commenting on a draft of our report, the Department stated that responsibility for implementing interim measures should be left to the ingenuity of post security officers because appropriate measures vary from post to post. We believe the effectiveness of interim measures would be greatly enhanced if the Department and other agencies were to develop guidance and provide information on measures being undertaken at other posts to assist the posts in selecting the most appropriate interim measures.

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### Standards Needed for Contract Guards

The protection of U S. personnel and property overseas is principally the responsibility of host governments, yet their capability to meet security needs varies widely. Some countries provide armed guards, police, or military personnel to prevent criminal or terrorist penetration of our embassies. In addition, the Department contracts for guards to enhance internal embassy security, control access into the compound, guard residences, inspect vehicles and packages, and perform other duties. In fiscal year 1985 the Department hired 10,437 contract guards worldwide at a cost of about \$52 million. The Department estimates the contract guard costs will grow to over \$70 million in fiscal year 1987.<sup>2</sup>

The effectiveness of contract guards varied significantly at the locations we visited. In general, the quality of guard forces overseas raised serious questions about training, supervision, and hiring procedures, particularly background investigations. For example, at one post a school guard left his gun in a bathroom where it was found by a child; at this same post another guard had abandoned his post at the Ambassador's residence. At several posts we were told by the security officers that the training and proficiency of the guards were inadequate and that they did not have the time to train the guards themselves. At two posts we were told the contractor was paying the guards less than stipulated

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<sup>2</sup>Contract guards are in addition to Marine security guards stationed at 125 posts worldwide to provide internal security guard services at embassies and posts. See appendix V for information on use of Marine security guards.

in the contract, causing morale problems and high turnover. At yet another post, in the critical threat category, the security officer said most of the guards on duty had not received required background security investigations.

Historically, these guards have served more as watchmen or "visual deterrents" rather than as well trained, highly skilled security specialists. At one post, for example, daily-hired cleaning crews were given a secondary duty of guarding the Ambassador's residence. At another post the regional security officer told us that contract guards had been used primarily to wash cars, trim shrubs, and perform other duties that are clearly not security related. At a third post, the Ambassador required the contract guards stationed at his residence to walk his pet poodle around the grounds. We were told several guards had quit because the task was considered degrading.

At the time we completed our work, standards and a procedural manual were being developed by a contractor for the posts to use in establishing their guard program. In commenting on a draft of our report, the Department said a standard manual for hiring, training, and supervising contract guards is scheduled for distribution to all overseas posts in June 1986.

# FY 1985 Security Supplemental Funds Appropriated and Obligations by Major Category as of January 31, 1986

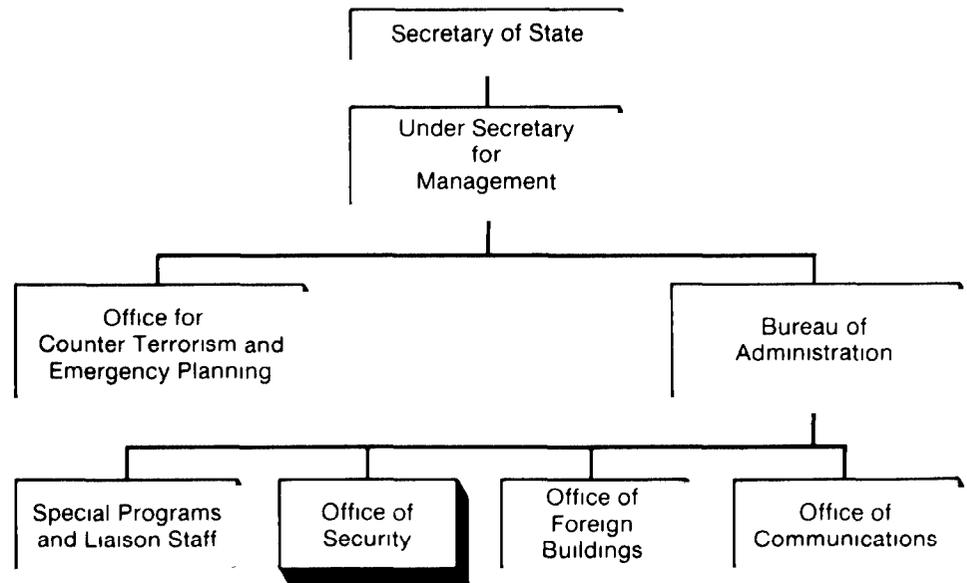
Thousands of Dollars		
Major category	Appropriated funding	Obligations
Communications systems and radios	\$ 29,793	\$13,526
Regional security officer positions and support	5,191	1,864
Embassy perimeter improvements	63,634	32,044
Security enhancements for U S government-controlled buildings	13,208	142
Overseas physical security information management	1,106	907
Marine security guard control booths	1,500	1,025
Overseas engineering offices	2,497	627
Navy engineering support	2,494	415
Vehicles	14,121	5,872
Marine security guard support	4,013	1,640
Overseas security guards and support costs	3,019	3,019
Special protective equipment	1,726	992
Development of physical barriers	1,888	1,787
Overseas security coordination	14	•
Threat analysis operations	301	•
Specialized training	2,140	1,344
Emergency planning exercises	1,037	985
Counterterrorism	23	23
Overseas security support	3,778	2,290
Main State security	4,030	1,629
Passport agency security	336	336
Centrally managed <sup>a</sup>	\$ 2,688	\$ 2,688
USIA	5,315	3,467
Rewards	2,000	•
New buildings and support	177,511	22,480
<b>Total FY 1985 Supplemental</b>	<b>\$343,363<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>\$99,102</b>

<sup>a</sup>Includes funds for salaries and post assignment travel of headquarters personnel

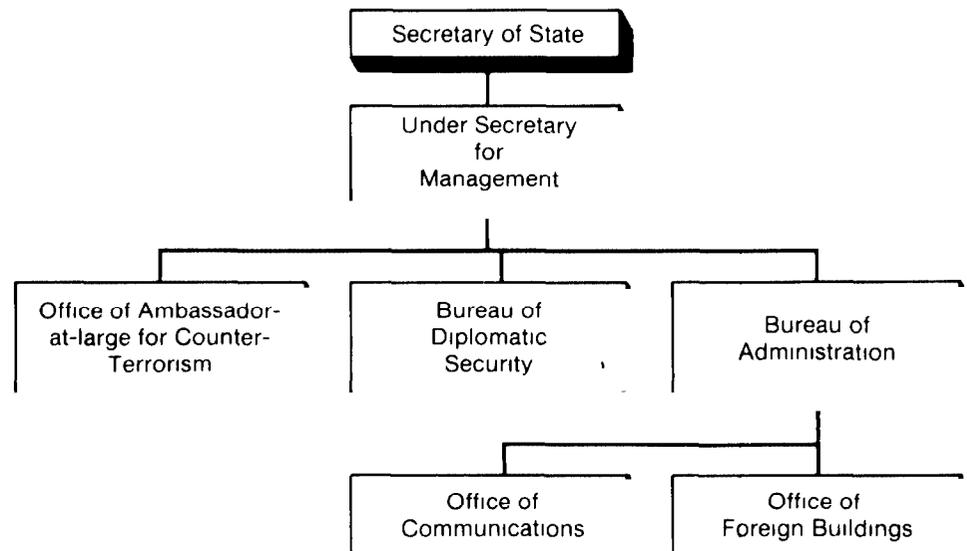
<sup>b</sup>During most of fiscal year 1985, only \$110.2 million was available for obligation. The remaining \$233.1 million was appropriated on August 15, 1985.

# Department of State Organization for Security

Organization for Security Prior to March 1985



Organization for Security After November 1985



Note During the period between March-November 1985, the Special Programs and Liaison Staff was disbanded and the Bureau of Administration was temporarily renamed the Bureau of Administration and Security

# Disagreements Identified by GAO Involving Security Improvements at Posts and Comments From State Department

## GAO INFORMATION PROVIDED TO STATE DEPARTMENT IN APRIL 1985

In our last two reports we discussed problems caused by disagreements between the State Department and other agencies at posts. In our last report we indicated that improvements in resolving these differences had been made and our current work indicates this trend has continued.

However, at the posts we visited, recommendations for security improvements at other agencies were not always being implemented. In some cases, this was because agencies disagreed with State over what was needed, who would pay for the improvements, and the timing of the upgrade, especially when a move was contemplated. For example;

1. Post A<sup>1</sup> A disagreement between State and USIA over the location of a safehaven has caused a 2 year delay. A safehaven was recommended by the SEP survey team in 1981. It was to be constructed in the basement. USIA, however, wanted it located on the third floor. Agreement was finally reached in May 1984 to build on the third floor of the building. The project has not yet been started. Post officials did not know when the project was scheduled to begin but speculated that USIS may be delaying because it would affect their normal operations during construction.
2. Post B A disagreement between State and AID over funding of a PAC project has been pending since September 1983. The project was recommended in the 1981 SEP survey report, however, AID and State did not agree on who would fund the project. Until September 1984, the project was carried on the monthly project status report as funding unknown.
3. Post C The RSO and AID security officers have made separate and different recommendations for security improvements. For example, the hardening of windows with grills and mylar and the construction of a new safehaven vault in the center of the building. The RSO told us he did not always agree with AID's recommendations. Both are awaiting results of the

<sup>1</sup>Post identifications have been deleted for security reasons.

Appendix IV  
Disagreements Identified by GAO Involving  
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survey conducted in August 1984 by AID prior to implementing any recommendations. The results had not been received as of January 24, 1985. In addition, there is some question as to which agency at Washington headquarters will provide the funding for these recommendations.

4. Post D A recommendation to reinforce the vehicle gate at the USIS facility has been delayed 10 months. Post officials are currently looking for a new USIS facility and don't agree on the need to complete the project at the current location.
5. Post E Interim security measures and relocation were recommended for the USIS/AID building approximately 10 months ago. None of the five recommendations had been implemented at the time of our visit, some were in process and one was not being considered for implementation i.e., bollards at the USIS/AID facility. Post officials are currently looking for new facilities for both AID and USIS and making improvements to a rented facility has caused disagreement in implementing recommendations.
6. Post F The Director of the Commercial Service sought Ambassador approval and succeeded in not being included in the hardline area of the Chancery PAC. As a result, the Commercial Service personnel (excluding the director) have little protection and no escape capability to secured areas in the Chancery.
7. Post G The RSO recommended in late 1984 interim security measures for AID's annex building. In addition to other recommendations made in the 1983 SEP survey, recommendations included:
  - a. construction of concrete planters in front of the building,
  - b. installing ballistic material in lobby waiting area, and
  - c. installing reinforced doors in the lobby.

Of the three recommendations, the AID executive officer told us he only intended to install the ballistic material in the lobby waiting area. The SEP survey also recommended that USIS move to a new location because the building is unsecurable. However, USIS officials do not agree with this recommendation and intend to remain in the current location.

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**Appendix IV  
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**Disagreements Between the  
Department and Posts**

In our previous reports we observed that some projects were delayed because the Department and post officials disagreed over the details of security improvements. We found during our recent visits that such disagreements have continued to cause delays, ranging from several months to several years at most of the posts we visited.

1. Post H The architectural drawings for access controls were completed in June 1980; however, post and headquarters officials disagreed over the design and funding for the project. In January 1983, a survey team recommended further design changes. The project was finally completed in April 1984--more than 4 years later. Because of these delays, other major upgrades will not be completed until August 1985.
2. Post I The post is currently scheduled for a new building, however, the Ambassador believes that the security situation argues for moving to a temporary facility while the new building is being constructed. The Office of Foreign Buildings reviewed the proposed temporary site and concluded that it would be too costly and that the facility was structurally unsafe. The Ambassador disagreed with this assessment and insisted on a second study. The Department contracted with a private organization to evaluate again the feasibility of moving to the proposed temporary facility. Meanwhile, acquisition of a permanent site has already been delayed by at least 5 months while the Department deals with the question of the interim office building.
3. Post J The security of consular space was determined to be inadequate in 1982. Because of other funding priorities, the Office of Foreign Buildings recommended moving to rental space rather than new construction at this time. The post subsequently chose a rental location which the Department surveyed and rejected in August 1983. Subsequently, the Department recommended an alternative location which the post rejected. In April 1984 the post agreed to the location previously proposed by the Department. Modification of the rental space is scheduled for completion in April 1985.
4. Post K In March 1981 the SET recommended ballistic materials be placed inside Annex windows. Later, there was concern that the Annex building was not structurally sound enough to withstand the weight of ballistic materials. In July 1983 post transmitted a structural analysis prepared by a post contractor to FBO. Analysis concluded that the Annex building could hold the weight of ballistic materials. There has been

**Appendix IV  
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no response to post regarding the analysis despite several post requests. Currently, no ballistic protection is in place and a new building is planned. During our visit in January 1985, Embassy officials said that FBO is planning a new Annex building but the Ambassador wants a new Chancery. Although need exists for a new Annex, the Ambassador wants a new Chancery and to turn the current Chancery into an Annex. The effect of this could be to increase costs from the \$11 million earmarked for the new Annex to \$25-30 million for a new Chancery, according to post officials.

5. Post L In October 1984, the post requested approval of a new guard booth for better entry/exit controls. Since then proposal ideas have gone back and forth between State and post concerning the location of the booth. In late January 1985, FBO made a site visit and carried new drawings and sketches back to Washington for review. The post has no idea when the project will be approved and implemented.
6. Post M A disagreement exists over the need for a second escape hatch in the PCC safehaven. The proposed project is still pending. A request for the escape hatch was made on October 24, 1984. State's response on November 22, 1984 denied the request. However, State proposed an alternative on January 17, 1985, which was not addressed by the post during our visit.
7. Post N Headquarters and post personnel disagreed over the two main areas of the project, the location of the safehaven and the design of the main lobby. The disagreement concerning the main lobby delayed implementation for more than a year while the differences were being resolved. The disagreement on where to locate the new CIHS also delayed the PCC upgrade, now scheduled to begin April 1985.
8. Post O The Department recommended and funded the construction of bollards. The post has received the bollards, but does not intend to go forward with implementing the project until they perceive it is warranted by the threat.
9. Post P The SET survey in May 1984 and the perimeter survey team in October 1984 recommended the installation of bollards on the sidewalk of the Ambassador's residence to increase the security setback by approximately 10-15 feet. This recommendation has not been considered for implementation by the post. However, in October 1984, the Ambassador recommended to State Department that a new Ambassador's residence be bought or constructed to provide adequate security to an indefensible site. State responded that no funds are available to pursue acquisition or capital

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development. In both instances, recommendations which have originated from State and post are not being considered for implementation.

In October 1984, a Department security survey recommended to relocate USIS/USAID into a more secure building. Post officials agreed with the survey team's findings and recommendations, and in October 1984, the Ambassador recommended that the Department authorize the construction of a new embassy annex within the Embassy compound. State responded by stating that the Post must make the host agencies (USIA/USAID) aware that alternative facilities should be found without delay and must be funded by the respective Washington agencies. At the time of our review, the RSO stated that this recommendation is still an issue to be considered by the Department despite USIS looking for an alternate location outside the compound.

In commenting on a draft of our report, USIA stated that the situations we identified at posts A, E, and G during our visits have been resolved. At post D the search for a new USIS facility continues, and interim measures have not yet been implemented. In discussing these situations, USIA stated that it did not disagree with State over the need to relocate USIS facilities to more secure locations.

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United States Department of State

Deputy Assistant Secretary of State  
for Security

Washington, D C 20520

August 23, 1985

Mr. Frank C. Conahan  
Director  
National Security and International  
Affairs Division  
United States General Accounting Office  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Conahan:

Mr. Lamb has asked me to research the purported deficiencies in our overseas security posture which you detailed in the enclosure to your letter of April 2, 1985. You identified problems in relationships between the State Department and other agencies at overseas posts concerning security improvements, and perceived disagreements between the State Department and overseas posts.

I am enclosing the results of our research. For ease of reference I have listed the posts in the order they appear in the enclosure to your letter. We found some of the deficiencies/problems your staff identified were valid. Where possible corrective action has been taken.

I would hope that closer coordination will help reduce any communications gap which could affect the security of our personnel and installations abroad.

Sincerely,

David C. Fields

Enclosure: As Stated.

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**RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN STATE DEPARTMENT  
AND OTHER AGENCIES AT POST CONCERNING  
SECURITY IMPROVEMENTS**

1. Post A

The GAO report is correct concerning the disagreement over the location of the safehaven. In May 1984, an agreement was reached between USIS and the Department's RSO concerning the location of the safehaven on the third floor. USIS requested funds from USIA Washington which were provided in August 1984 for completion of the safehaven project. On April 22, 1985, USIA/M/SP confirmed that this project was completed in December 1984.

2. Post B

This project was funded by the Department's SPL program and neither the Department nor AID are aware of any specific disagreements. During a September 1984 visit, USAID/IG/SEC found that public access control projects were being implemented at AID facilities in a satisfactory manner and when queried, commented that they could find no basis for GAO's findings.

3. Post C

There is often more than one correct solution for a security problem and in cases where RSOs and USAID security officers differ, resolutions are affected in Washington.

AID is withholding the August 1984 survey report until a determination is made concerning the future size of the mission. There is no ambiguity regarding funding. USAID/IG/SEC advises that any costs for security improvements to existing office space will be borne by USAID.

4. Post D

Post is seeking a site for relocation of the USIS facility that will meet new security guidelines. Finding a new location has been difficult, but efforts continue. As an interim measure, USIA recently provided the requested \$9,600 to upgrade the vehicle gates, install bollards and reinforce the existing wall. Construction will take place in the near future.

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5. Post E

The major reason for lack of action on the recommended upgrades to the USIS/USAID building is the proposed move to another location. Because there has been unanimous agreement as to the vulnerability of the facility, efforts were begun immediately to identify a suitable facility. Basically, USAID and USIA were of the opinion that it was not cost effective to commence with the recommended upgrades assuming a move is planned in the near future. However, efforts to find a suitable location have been unsuccessful. After exhaustive searching, it has been determined that there are no suitable buildings that would provide the desired setback distance in the center of the city. One alternative being considered is to construct a new building on the chancery compound that would house both facilities. While this matter is being discussed, post is now going ahead with plans to construct bollards on the sidewalk around the current facility. Construction will begin once city approval has been received.

6. Post F

The GAO report is correct. The Commercial Counselor objected to the proposed hardline in Phase I of the SPL project. He convinced the Ambassador that the hardening was not needed and this part of the project was dropped. The hardline design was reconfigured in May 1984 so that FCS employees have access to a safehaven area in the chancery. They do not have protection in their work area.

7. Post G

The planters, lobby ballistic material, and reinforced doors have not been installed because USAID is scheduled to move to a new facility in September 1985. Necessary security hardware is being ordered for delivery and installation before that date.

USIA will be sending a survey team to \_\_\_\_\_ in the near future to review the overall security posture and make a determination concerning the relocation of the USIS facility.

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DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN DEPARTMENT AND POST

1. Post H

The dispute over design and funding was more complex than the GAO comment indicated.

The structural engineer on the survey found that the chancery and annex structures were insufficient to carry the design weight load of the 1980 proposal. In January 1983, another team was dispatched to resurvey the facilities. An entirely new design was worked out, funded, and installed. Phase II of this project was completed in late April 1985. Phase I was completed in the chancery in April 1984. This project was phased to fast-track each of the two high threat areas of this mission. Completion within 26 months of two major renovations in two separate facilities has not been without some degree of accomplishment.

2. Post I

The situation is correct. Although an NOB was already scheduled for , the idea of relocating to an interim facility was investigated. Post and Department agreed that only one of the available hotels might be suitable. An FBO structural team visited post and determined from concrete core sample test results that the concrete construction in the proposed hotel had serious quality defects which effectively rendered the building unsatisfactory.

The Ambassador questioned the test results and insisted on a second evaluation. A second concrete core test was authorized and the results were received in FBO last week for a final determination. If it is determined that the concrete construction is satisfactory, the Department will evaluate the cost effectiveness of acquiring and rebuilding the hotel.

3. Post J

Major security renovations at the chancery, including the demolition of all ground floor exterior walls, could not be completed without the relocation of the consular section. The incumbent ambassador insisted that all of his staff be located within ten minutes of the chancery. The post located numerous buildings including one which was a distance of 15 minutes from the chancery. The Department's survey team found this building to be acceptable for the consular section. Unfortunately, the ambassador rejected the building because of distance.

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This project languished until the arrival of the current ambassador. He accepted the Department's recommendation shortly after his arrival at post. Contracts were let, equipment was ordered, and modifications were made to the rental property. The property was completed within nine months.

4. Post K

The report is correct. SPL recommended ballistic inserts for the window units of the annex building. A structural engineer determined that the floor loading capability of the annex would not support the weight of the ballistic material and the occupants. The post commissioned a local engineer, who concluded that the building could hold the weight of the PAC materials. However, his report did not address the weight load factor of occupants and office equipment.

The owner of the building has subsequently decided to install individually-poured concrete window panel units. They will be attached to the aluminum window frames. These units offer some limited ballistic protection, however, in the event of an explosion they will become secondary missiles.

5. Post L

Two designs for the guard/prescreening booth currently exist. A second design is being developed through the Department's Turnkey program. A decision will be made within 60 days and the post will be advised.

6. Post M

Post requested a second escape hatch for emergency egress from the safehaven. Current security and fire safety policy requires that a means of emergency egress be provided from safehavens. Since the existing hatch satisfied the Department's egress criteria, a second hatch was disapproved. However, in January 1985, the Department suggested a compromise solution which the post will implement at its discretion.

7. Post N

project was delayed due to a major FBO asbestos removal project that became necessary after the SPL survey. No construction work could be accomplished until the asbestos was removed. Work began on the PAC after the asbestos project was completed. The PAC was completed in September 1984. The Department is unaware of any delays resulting from disagreements concerning the PAC plan.

# The Use of Marine Security Guards

Marine security guards are stationed at 125 posts worldwide, and plans are to station guards at 37 more posts by fiscal year 1988. Their primary mission is to provide internal security guard services to the embassies and consulates. Marine guards may also be used to protect some offices of other overseas agencies. Services provided include the protection of personnel, property, classified material, and equipment within the premises. A Memorandum of Understanding between the Marine Corps and the State Department outlines the Marine security guard program. This memorandum discusses the role, support, and limitations on the use of Marines outside of official premises. The memorandum states that, generally, they are not responsible for protecting the outside perimeter, which is the responsibility of the host government.

The Marine guards are supervised by the post security officer, who provides direction and instructions for the operations of the Marines at post and ensures that they are properly housed and supported. The noncommissioned officer in charge is the senior member of the Marine detachment, and he supervises and administratively controls the detachment. Operationally, the Marine guards are not responsible to any military command during either normal or crisis situations. The Marine Corps provides the guards with administrative services, including inspections, about twice a year.

At the posts we visited, the role of the Marine security guards was generally being performed according to the Memorandum of Understanding. In a few instances, we found the Marines were not being used appropriately. For example, at one post the Marines were used to guard the Ambassador's residence; at another post, a Marine was standing guard at a location that did not have a public access control booth, as required.

At several posts we found that the location and security of the Marine house was a concern. The Marines believed the facilities were vulnerable to terrorist threats due to the proximity to the street and adjacent buildings. In several instances, the relocation of Marine houses was recommended by security survey teams.

# Agency Comments



United States Department of State

Comptroller

Washington, D.C. 20520

April 29, 1986

Dear Frank:

I am replying to the letter from Ms. Joan M. McCabe of March 24, 1986 to the Secretary which forwarded copies of the draft report: "Embassy Security: State Department's Efforts to Improve Security Overseas."

The enclosed comments on this report were prepared in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the Office of Foreign Buildings.

We appreciate having had the opportunity to review and comment on the draft report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roger".

Roger B. Feldman

Enclosure:  
As stated.

Mr. Frank C. Conahan,  
Director, National Security and  
International Affairs Division,  
U. S. General Accounting Office.

GAO DRAFT REPORT: EMBASSY SECURITY: STATE DEPARTMENT'S EFFORTS  
TO IMPROVE SECURITY OVERSEAS

The Department appreciates the magnitude of the effort that went into the preparation of this draft report, which covers an area of major significance to the Department and its personnel, as well as to the other foreign affairs agencies and to the Congress. We have found the comments and recommendations helpful. The report not only identifies areas where improvements are required but also acknowledges progress that has been made in our efforts to improve security overseas.

There are three specific recommendations in the draft report. All are listed on page 3. Action on them is being taken by the Department. They pertain to:

- realistic cost estimates and recurring costs,
- mechanism for resolution of differences concerning security requirements, and
- standards and improvements.

We would hope that the following comments on these recommendations will be taken into account when preparing the final report.

Recommendation: Ensure that more realistic cost estimates for security and construction projects are prepared and that recurring costs for staffing and maintenance projects initially funded by security supplementals are made known to the Congress.

Comment: As the draft report indicates, cost increases occur because of more stringent security standards for new buildings, design changes, and lack of qualified contractors in certain countries.

The estimates in the perimeter security program and the new capital construction program have been reviewed thoroughly to ensure that the cost estimates are realistic and adequate to fund the current security criteria.

We have been informing the Congress through monthly reports, and including in the annual budget submissions, all costs resulting from the expansion of the Department's security-related activities. These methods of reporting ensure that the Congress is kept informed of the financial impact of the activities.

One basis of this recommendation, according to the report's narrative, was the increased cost of the perimeter security projects. Originally, the FY 86 Supplemental Budget request was intended to improve perimeter security of only principal office

Now on p 2

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buildings. A comprehensive review of our vulnerabilities indicated the need to also upgrade the perimeter security of office annexes and residences of our Chiefs of Mission and U.S. Marine Security Guards. Consequently, this change in scope of work resulted in higher cost estimates at all affected posts.

Another basis of this recommendation was the request for additional funds to complete the 13 projects funded under the FY 85 security supplemental. The projects included in the FY 85 security supplemental were, for the most part, just entering into design when the supplemental was developed in September 1984, and the estimates were realistic for buildings under the old security criteria. The current security criteria, e.g., 100 foot setback, extensive "hardening" of facilities, and shielding were not established when the security supplemental budget was prepared. The amount requested reflects the costs of the new security criteria incorporated into the projects during the design phase.

Recommendation: Establish a mechanism to ensure that differences concerning security requirements within the Department or between the Department and other agencies are resolved quickly.

Comment: We agree that, in the past, bureaucratic gridlock has often prevented action on security measures. We have been working with the other agencies to arrive at agreeable standards which would eliminate most of the problem. In addition, we are holding monthly meetings with other agency representatives to discuss and coordinate security projects. If agreement cannot be reached through this process, the issues are referred to the Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security who is responsible for ensuring completion of security projects. If necessary, he can appeal to the Under Secretary for Management who has the authority to direct a resolution.

Recommendation: Develop standards covering (1) minimum physical and procedural security requirements for posts in each threat category, (2) interim security measures, and (3) hiring, training, and supervision of contract guards.

Comment:

- (1) Minimum physical security requirements - The draft report comments on the considerable progress that has been made in developing and implementing standards to meet known threats. Standards are under constant review and require periodic updating. Draft copies of a revised Physical Security Standards Handbook are currently under review by representatives of the major foreign affairs agencies and the Department of Defense.

Minimum procedural security requirements - The Department is in the process of developing a procedural security manual which addresses such measures as vehicle

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inspection for bombs, identification badges for employees, parking on compound, etc. The second draft has been completed and is under review. This manual will outline procedures to be implemented based upon the threat level of the post and should eliminate the security variations now existing from post-to-post.

- (2) Interim security measures - The professional security officers assigned to our overseas posts are familiar with the equipment available for installation on a permanent basis. Further, they are aware of our objective to deny potential terrorists access to the compounds/office buildings. Interim measures are left to their ingenuity since those to be employed vary from post-to-post.

Table 1-2 of Appendix I indicates that a number of foreign service posts surveyed by GAO representatives lack physical security measures such as public access controls, electrical vehicle arrest systems, and perimeter walls. Subsequent to the GAO trips, permanent security improvements have been made at a number of the posts. Where feasible, interim measures have been taken at the remaining posts.

- (3) Hiring, training, and supervision of contract guards - Standards for hiring, training, and supervising contract guards have been incorporated in the Establishment and Management of Local Guard Forces manual which is being printed for distribution to all overseas posts in June 1986. This comprehensive document addresses the selection, supervision, training, equipment, contracting, and funding of local guards. It also outlines the management and administrative support role of the Regional Security Officers who are responsible for the overseas program.

We would hope that the following commentary on portions of the draft report also would be considered when preparing the final report. The report page number and language are followed by our commentary.

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Page 8 - "The Department estimates that all 13 buildings will be completed and occupied by the end of Fiscal Year 1988, although several are behind schedule."

In the main, these projects are proceeding on schedule. We are experiencing difficulties in three locations: Cairo, Kuwait, and Damascus.

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Agency Comments**

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In Cairo we had planned to upgrade the Marine Security Guard quarters so that additional MSGs could be housed there for the next five years until we can complete new MSG quarters. The project is being cancelled, however, since a partial renovation would not correct the building's substantial deficiencies. Also, a total rehabilitation would not be economical since the structure will be demolished within three years as part of the compound development program. Until new MSG quarters are completed in the new Chancery, the MSG detachment will move into the U.S. Government-owned El Bargas Apartments five blocks away from the present structure. After the MSGs are located, the present structure will be razed and the ground used as a staging area for construction on the compound.

In Kuwait, the Government of Kuwait proposed a site within a diplomatic enclave which is too small for our needs. We have requested a larger site, but that request must go before the Kuwaiti Parliament for approval.

The Syrian Government has refused to issue a building permit for our site in Damascus. The Embassy, working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, has identified several alternative sites. A/FBO staff will travel to Damascus soon to evaluate these potential sites.

Pages 11-12 - "In Moscow, . . . [t]he original estimate to complete these projects was about \$30 million, but through fiscal year 1985, the Department was appropriated over \$167 million for these projects."

Since the original estimate was made, we have factored in additional project costs for inflation, security-related features, and difficulties encountered with Soviet construction. Congress has approved these increases but has provided funds to us incrementally:

Moscow Regular and Supplemental Requests (in thousands)

<u>FY</u>	<u>BY YEAR</u>	<u>CUM.</u>	<u>REG./SUPPL.</u>
77	30,000	30,000	REG.
78	45,000	75,000	REG.
79	16,500	91,500	REG.
80	- 0 -	91,500	N/A
81	12,000	103,500	REG.
82	31,700	135,200	REG.
83	4,625	139,825	SUPPL. *
84	7,140	146,964	SUPPL. **
85	20,100	167,065	SUPPL. ***

- \* Includes \$825,000 proceeds of sales
- \*\* Totally security related
- \*\*\* Estimated extra costs due to Soviet delays and general malperformance. Costs are being claimed against Soviet contractors.

Now on p 9

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Costs for the Soviet project, especially given that the USSR is a high cost construction environment, are moderate. The average worldwide cost of construction is \$200 per square foot; Moscow costs are \$225 per square foot.

Now on p 16

Pages 21-22 - "The Office of Security has established, or was in the process of establishing, technical specifications for a wide range of physical security items to protect the perimeter, exterior, and interior of our diplomatic installations. We identified at least 20 security manuals, cables, memoranda, and other written materials that provide such guidance."

Various manuals, policies, standards and criteria are being integrated into one usable document. The first draft of this document is due the end of May.

Now on p 17

Page 23 - "The Department has a shortage of maintenance personnel to meet the increased maintenance requirements resulting from vehicle arrest systems and other new security devices."

We are addressing this issue. Private sector Program Managers will be required to develop a maintenance program for standard and specialized maintenance at post.

We note that Appendix II of the report reflects the obligations incurred under the FY 1985 Supplemental as of January 1986. The data is accurate but somewhat misleading. The appropriated funding column totalling \$343.3 million covers Fiscal Years 1985 and 1986. During most of FY 1985, only \$110.2 million was available for obligation. The remaining \$233.1 million was appropriated on August 15, 1985.

Appendix VI  
Agency Comments

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
WASHINGTON D C 20523

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

APR 25 1986

Mr. Joan M. McCabe  
Associate Director  
National Security and  
International Affairs Division  
U. S. General Accounting Office  
Washington, D. C. 20548

Dear Ms. McCabe:

We have reviewed the March 1986 draft report entitled "Embassy Security, State Department Efforts to Improve Security Overseas," as requested in your letter dated March 24, 1986.

AID was identified within your report with regard to one major problem (STATE/AID Security Differences) and four minor post-specific problems. We consider the explanations presented in Mr. David Fields' letter of August 23, 1985 (appendix IV of your report), to have satisfactorily resolved the post-specific issues. To further update Mr. Fields' comments of August 1985, post G subsequently installed planters in front of their building, hardened their lobby, and installed the reinforced lobby door.

From a policy point of view, the recently signed charter for the Overseas Security Policy Group, of which AID is a participating member, should ensure our Agency the opportunity to make significant contributions to the safety and security of the Foreign Affairs community. For example, AID was a lead Agency in the development of residential security standards recently promulgated by State AIRGRAM A-574. We further believe that our Emergency Communications Program is the standard bearer within the overseas arena and that our input into revision of policies in this area will enhance the safety of all Foreign Service employees stationed abroad.

Overall, cooperation and coordination on overseas security between AID and the Department of State has been generally close and effective. AID's principal problem in the relationship has been the severe constraints on resources devoted to overseas security stemming from limited AID funding.

Please contact me if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

  
Herbert L. Beckington

**United States  
Information  
Agency**

Washington, D.C. 20541

Office of the Director



April 25, 1986

Dear Ms. McCabe:

Thank you for forwarding for agency review and comment copies of GAU's draft report "Embassy Security - State Department Efforts to Improve Security Overseas." A copy of your transmittal letter of March 24, 1986 is attached for your convenience. While agreeing in principle with the report's general findings, we do have the following comments to make regarding specific items mentioned in the report.

Now on p 12, para 3

1. Page 17, paragraph one, Appendix I - The report ascribes to the Overseas Security Policy Group (OSPG) identification of threats, establishment of evacuation policies and implementation of minor security improvements. To our knowledge, the OSPG has never formally addressed any of these issues. The OSPG is not constituted, in our opinion, to address time-sensitive issues or detailed project implementation. We agree that it provides a forum for airing differences, and that it promulgated guidelines on residential security and other policies.

Now on p 13, para 5

2. Page 18, paragraph three, Appendix I - Both State Department and USIA have established minimum physical security standards which are applicable worldwide regardless of threat. The USIA standards apply to our establishments which are not located in State Department buildings. Therefore, the report's comment that "minimum security standards for posts have not been established" is inaccurate. Despite the existence of such standards, safeguards vary from post to post due to priorities established to implement upgrade programs, and because the standards have undergone revision since originally published to meet changing threats.

Ms. Joan M. McCabe  
Associate Director  
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Washington, D.C. 20548

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USIA cleared a revision on April 7, 1986 of the Department's physical security standards which included a section on interim security measures. We also coordinated with the Department on January 28, 1986 on a worldwide policy governing use of local guard forces.

Now on p 2, para 1, p 12,  
pp 22-31

3. Page 2, paragraph 2 of the letter transmitting the report; page 16, Appendix I; and pages 29-36 Appendix IV - The report highlights some individual problems caused by disagreements between the Department and USIA which were the focus of GAO's previous two reports on the subject, dated 1984 and 1982. Concerning those USIA establishments which were mentioned, these comments are provided:

Now on p 28

A. Post A - As reported by State Department (p. 35 Appendix IV), the issue of safehaven location was resolved two years ago, and the project completed at that time.

B. Post D - There has been no disagreement between State and USIA on the need to relocate. Despite extensive activity to locate a suitable site meeting current security guidelines, this search has not yet met with success. Until special funds, requested in a security supplemental now before the Congress, and an appropriate site are available, USIA will remain at the current location. To enhance its security there funding was provided to install bollards, upgrade vehicle gates, and reinforce the perimeter wall. To date the post has not moved ahead on implementing these measures, as they have been engaged in looking for a new site.

Now on p 29

C. Post E - Effective March 1986, USIA relocated to a more secure building and all security systems and procedures are operational. The need to relocate was never at issue between State and USIA.

D. Post G - USIA entered into a lease agreement to relocate into a more secure building this month. No disagreement on the need to relocate existed between State and USIA.

The decision to relocate USIA establishments when the buildings they occupy cannot meet current security standards has been a difficult one for this agency. In several cases, recommendations were made some time ago, but special supplemental funding to handle all relocation-associated costs

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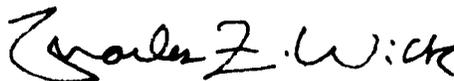
is still not yet available. USIA reprogrammed its own resources to move ahead on several urgent relocations. We also worked extensively with the Department to achieve flexibility in applying the new criteria for site selection, primarily the 100 foot setback requirement. Because of our need for accessibility by our audiences, moving out of the preferred downtown areas to suburban locales where such setbacks are available is an unacceptable solution. The Department now agrees with USIA on this issue, and has approved our alternate site selections in most cases, although full setback requirements cannot be met. This issue exemplifies, however, the need for a flexible approach in the application of desirable security standards, particularly when unique needs, such as public access, are involved.

Now on p 2

We agree with the report's recommendation on page three, paragraph two that the Department should establish a mechanism to ensure that differences concerning security requirements between the Department and other agencies are resolved quickly. The USPG, recently chartered by the Department, can address policy issues, but is not designed to deal with individual post problems related to security requirements. We initiated the assignment of a security specialist from our Office of Security to the Department's Diplomatic Security Service to perform liaison on individual projects, but more needs to be done to improve the situation.

A final note with respect to establishing adequate protection at our separate establishments. We are in the process of revising the security support agreement between the Department and USIA to delineate the services to be provided by the Department to those establishments and the role of our Office of Security, where our own security specialists have expertise, in inspections, project design, and implementation. Clarifying these roles in the new agreement should go a long way to resolving differences between the two agencies.

Sincerely,



Charles Z. Wick  
Director

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